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in the biblical text. Among all the changes that have occurred in the sacred text, among all the variations of MSS. and Versions, no collator or editor has ever mentioned this substitution of letters for the written numbers.

Fourthly; If the representing of numbers by letters is of an origin subsequent to the Captivity, and, so far as we *know*, this is really the case, it should require the most overwhelming evidence to convince us, in the absence of MS. authority upon the subject, that the Jews ever introduced numeral letters into their Bibles. The rigid laws controlling the transcription of the synagogue rolls made this an absolute impossibility, so far as these were concerned; and, as for private MSS. of the Scriptures, the superstitious regard entertained for them would have prevented the substitution, in these, of the letters for numbers. MSS. which were so carefully and superstitiously copied as to hand down through the ages all the minutest peculiarities, such as the *nun inversum* and the *literae majusculae* and *minusculae*, could never have admitted so violent an innovation.

Fifthly; After all, granting everything that is claimed upon the subject, we have only a very round-about way of admitting that, in this one regard at least, our text is not in the form in which it was originally penned.

We hope that criticism, as it advances, may yet remove all such difficulties of the Word of God; but let us be honest, as well as zealous, in our efforts. All such methods as that above given can only weaken our cause in the estimation of those who understand the subject. A few such arguments in support of the inspiration of the Bible would be a powerful argument in favor of its mere human origin.

➤GENERAL NOTES.◀

The time of Abraham's birth. — It is generally believed that he was born about 2000 B. C. It is not so easy, however, to determine the interval between his birth and the deluge. The Hebrew and Septuagint versions of the Scriptures differ with reference to it by many centuries. The discrepancy may perhaps have arisen from the custom among ancient Jewish writers of "distributing genealogies broadly into divisions, and of compressing them with a view to such division. Sometimes we find generations omitted. For example, Laban (Gen. xxix., 5) is called the son of Nahor; he was the grandson. Also St. Matthew calls King Uzziah the son of Joram, whereas he was the great grandson, the intermediate generations having possibly been omitted by reason of their wickedness and relationship to Jezebel. Ezra omits five generations. St. Luke, on the other hand, inserts a generation between Salah and Arphaxad, ancestors of Abraham."

If the shorter interval be taken, Abraham will have received many of the traditions of the old world direct from Shem, or his contemporaries. If the longer interval be regarded as the most probable, a later generation will have communicated them to him. The writer has assumed the latter to have been the fact. As the lives of the patriarchs were long, and the power of tradition strong, as exemplified in a later age by the poems of Homer, there can be little doubt that such leading incidents as the Creation, the Fall, the Deluge and the Promise of a Deliverer would be preserved in the world. We believe that God has never yet left

Himself without witness among men, and that at the time of Abraham's call He had other true worshippers besides Melchizedek. It is not improbable, therefore, that God revealed the ancient truths and traditions to Abraham by the lips of men.—*From Allen's Abraham. His Life, Time, and Travels.*

Noble Thoughts in the Edenic Story.—Let us now point out some of the noble thoughts which underlie the Edenic story. 1. Here, then, first of all we find the sublimest possible conception of man's original. Man is Deiform, the image of the Infinite Being on earth, the direct creation of the Eternal Mind and Will. He is formed of the dust of the ground, *Adamah*, from which he takes his name of Adam, or *Earth*, dust and ashes, in the language of Abraham. He is formed as the last link in a series of animal lives, and on one side of his nature strongly resembles those beasts which perish. He belongs to the *Vertebrata*. His form has been typified and foretold in a long succession of old-world prophecies, in the structure of previous animals. But he does not spring from the earth, or from previous forms, as they did. He is specially fashioned by the Almighty Hand; God is represented as molding him, working out in living art the eternal idea; and then as breathing into him, by direct afflatus of Divinity, the breath of life. In this luminous ancient page man does not appear as a developed animal, an evolution from anthropoids, the lineal descendant of brutal races—but, while akin to these in inward structure of the body and mind, as possessed also of a higher nature, a nature resembling that of Deity—rational, moral, and royal; a nature which gives him the power of tracing up all effects to the Eternal Cause; of knowing his Maker, of communing with his God, of obeying and enjoying Him; a being inhabiting both worlds, of matter and spirit, holding intimate relations with both time and eternity, with both earth and heaven. The seal of the living God, of the Infinite Life, is on his forehead, and though capable of dying, he is not made to die. There is no idea in the modern books on the *Descent of Man* so grand as this.

2. An equal splendor and originality characterizes the relation of the creation of woman. As if foreseeing the debasing gorilla-philosophy of the last days, here, in the very dawn of history, the strongest possible contradiction is given, while humanity was still in its beginning, to the notion of human derivation from the animals. "And the Lord God said, It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make him a help-meet for him. And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them. And Adam gave names to the cattle, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam *there was not found an help-meet for him.*" Man was not a "beast of the field," no "beast's heart was given to him," therefore no modified anthropoid or simian could serve as his wife. For a modified gorilla, a modified simian would have served well enough. But Adam was of a Divine original, "made in God's image," and therefore Eve, in her glory and beauty, is the direct work of the Supreme Sculptor, Painter, Poet, and Life-giver; fashioning out of Adam himself the woman who should be one with him in life and love for ever and ever. Here is the strongest possible denial of the bestial original of humanity. He could not pair with the lower races, for his origin was directly from the sacred font of Deity. He was "the Son of God."

The building up of the frame of Eve out of materials of bone and flesh taken from the entranced form of Adam, is only a specific difference under the general